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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Austria/USSR

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SUBJECT Miscellaneous Information on Zistersdorf Oilfields

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

1. Until mid-June 1948, all oil from the Muehlberg field, richest in the Zistersdorf area, was conducted by pipe line to a storage area next to the railway loading point in Hauskirchen. This line had a branch leading to Neusiedl and to the terminus of the Neusiedl-Lobau pipe line, which was not yet ready for service. After the middle of June, however, oil from Muehlberg was pumped to Neusiedl storage tanks, which were supplemented by tanks reportedly brought from a central storage point in the Lobau. From here, oil could be pumped directly to the central storage point.

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Comment: According to a reliable source, the undamaged capacity of the Lobau storage area is about 60,000 cubic meters. These tanks formerly belonged to the German WIFO (Wirtschafts- und Forschungsgesellschaft) and are now part of the Soviet oil complex.)

There already exists a pipe line from the DEA fields to the Neusiedl storage tanks and, according to a Soviet engineer, another line, 300-400 meters in length, will be finished by the end of August to link the GLB III fields (Itag-Rammersdorf) to the Neusiedl network. Thus, output of the three most productive fields in Zistersdorf will be connected by pipe line to both Neusiedl and WIFO storage areas and to the so-called "Prague pipe line" into Czechoslovakia, which has recently been put into operations. This will render transport by tank car unnecessary for oil destined for Czechoslovakian refineries or for Nova, the Soviet refinery at Schwechat, which is also connected by pipe line to the WIFO storage area.

Comment: It should not be taken as definitive, however, that therefore all oil loaded into tank cars must be destined for countries other than Czechoslovakia. In the opinion of experts who have long dealt with the Soviets in oil matters, they will continue to load some tank cars at Hauskirchen and at Neusiedl simply in order to confuse efforts to trace the disposition of Zistersdorf crude oil. Since pumping and measuring apparatus is supervised entirely by Soviets, it will be virtually impossible to determine the amount of crude oil leaving Austria.)

2. The reason for bringing tanks from the WIFO area to Neusiedl, if this report is indeed true, are unknown. However, it may be a step in the consolidation of Soviet oil holdings in Austria. It could be significant, according to source, that several of the leading personalities of the recently dissolved Oil Staff

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Comment: [REDACTED], including Lutkov*, formerly chief of the Oil Staff, have been transferred to Muehlberg.

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Comment: Confirmed by a fairly reliable independent source).

Current rumors in the Zistersdorf fields indicate that since Muehlberg is the richest oil yielding area in Austria, the Soviets are massing the larger part of their resources in this vicinity in order to be able to connect this area closely with Czechoslovakia in the event of a future State Treaty for Austria, under the terms of which some of the less profitable oil fields may be returned to Austria.

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Comment: It might also be a move to decentralize storage facilities so as to present a more scattered target in the event of hostilities.)

3. Authoritative figures on the Soviet crude oil exports from Zistersdorf to the satellite states are not available, since, as reported previously, such exports are controlled and supervised entirely by Soviet personnel. However, from information supplied from the Hauskirchen loading area, it can be estimated that from this station, up until the middle of June 1948, about 20-22% of total Zistersdorf crude oil production was shipped by tank car to Czechoslovakia. For the past several months, one train daily (and occasionally two or three trains in one day) has gone from Hauskirchen into Czechoslovakia, carrying from 420-460 tons of crude oil with a maximum water content of 6%. These trains, which bear the Russian designation UT, have thus carried from 13000-15000 tons of crude oil monthly.

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Comment: Two other still untested sources variously estimate Soviet crude oil exports as 40% and 30-35% of total production. According to a recent documentary report from a source in Germany, figures taken from Soviet files indicate that during the first quarter of 1948, only 16,700 tons of Austrian crude oil reached the Soviet Zone of Germany. The Soviet committee making the report recommended that 10,000 tons be imported each month in the future. Thus it seems apparent that not all the oil exported to Czechoslovakia by train is used in Czechoslovak refineries, but is also allocated at least partly to the Soviet Zone of Germany. This supposition is supported by a reliable source in Vienna who cites the recent visit of the head of the Czechoslovak oil refining industries, who came to Austria to attempt to buy more crude oil. He made it known that Czech refineries are receiving so little crude oil that in all probability they may soon have to shut down unless crude stocks are increased.)

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Comment: This does not tally with information from the same source in [REDACTED] which states that Lutkov was transferred to the Central Administration of the Soviet Oil Companies in Austria, Kantgasse 1, Vienna I.)

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